

Today is World Oceans Day, and we have the opportunity to celebrate the beauty of our world's oceans and also commit to keeping them clean.

Right now we see all over the world that our oceans are under siege. Temperatures are rising, pollution riddles our waters and beaches, coral reefs are dying off, and marine life are being killed.

So as you recognize World Oceans Day, we can think about how, in our own lives—individually, as a family, as communities—we can do our part to take care of our planet by changing things like making sure we are not using toxic sunscreens that kill off our coral reef or the single-use plastics that pollute our waters.

We cannot wait for the tide to change. We have got to take action to make sure that our oceans and our planet are safe and clean for all life for generations to come.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Mariel Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

AZERBAIJAN'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. GAETZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the independence of Azerbaijan and to highlight the significance and importance of the U.S.-Azerbaijan relationship.

Throughout its history, Azerbaijan has resisted invasion from the Soviet Union. They were pioneers in advancing the cause of women's suffrage. Day in and day out, Azerbaijan cooperates on defense, counterintelligence, and counterterrorism activities. Azerbaijan established the first secular parliamentary democracy in the Muslim world. They have offered unconditional support to the United States after 9/11.

Here is to another 100 years of great prosperity for the people of Azerbaijan and a strong relationship with the United States.

CONGRATULATING LIEUTENANT COLONEL SEAN MORROW

(Mr. ROSKAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Lieutenant Colonel Sean Morrow, a constituent of the Sixth District of Illinois.

On June 19, Sean will be taking command of the United Nations Security Battalion in the Joint Security Area of the Demilitarized Zone on the Korean Peninsula. This unit is the most forward-

ward-deployed on the peninsula and stands on the front lines of freedom 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, facing the North Korean People's Army eye to eye in defense of democracy and our way of life.

As the son of a Korean war company commander myself, I am honored that my constituent is taking the helm of this command at such a crucial time. Sean is a warrior-scholar. A Ph.D. candidate in international relations at the University of Chicago, he is committed to protecting the United States on the battlefield but also rigorously studying the pressing national security challenges we face and their solutions. He has dedicated his life and his career to keeping our Nation safe.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Sean, his wife Meghan, and their three children God's very best, and I thank him for his service.

□ 1230

HONORING WILLIAM "BILL" HAMILTON, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Hamilton, Jr. of Overland Park, Kansas, who passed away on January 4, 2018. Bill was born in Dallas, Texas, on February 18, 1918. In 1940, he graduated from the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, now known as Texas A&M University, with a degree in civil engineering.

In World War II, Bill served as a lieutenant in the Army. He was in command of an antiaircraft unit in the Philippines at Corregidor Island. Bill was part of the American defensive forces trying to hold Corregidor Island from the Japanese.

Fighting valiantly, the American forces held the island for 5 months, only surrendering to Japanese forces after all ammunition and supplies were exhausted. The Japanese had expected to take the island in 3 weeks.

On April 21, 1942, while defending Corregidor, he and approximately 24 other Texas Aggies gathered together at The Rock, as Corregidor is now known, to observe Aggie Muster. While Japanese bombs fell on the island, those Aggies participated in this proud tradition and called the roll for those Aggies who had lost their lives during the preceding months. This event during wartime brought the solemn Aggie Muster tradition to the attention of the entire world.

With the passing of Bill Hamilton, we have lost the last of the survivors of the 1942 Muster at The Rock.

After being captured at Corregidor Island, Bill spent 3½ years as a prisoner of war, being held at camps, including Camp Cabanatuan in the Philippines and Camp Fukuoka in Japan.

Amazingly, Bill was a passenger on three Japanese prisoner ships that were struck by the U.S. Army Air Force, yet he survived all three incidents.

In August of 1945, he was finally liberated by the American forces from Camp Hoten in Manchuria. For his honorable and distinguished service, Bill received many honors, including a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart, the Distinguished Unit Badge, three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Prisoner of War Medal.

After the war, Bill resumed life in America, and he married the love of his life, Margaret Jacobs, in 1946. He also began working for the Santa Fe Railroad as a bridge engineer. Bill worked for the Santa Fe Railroad company for 38 years and was known as an exemplary employee.

A man of great character, Bill was an integral part of the veterans community and was a member of the Reserve Officers Association, Defenders of the Bataan and Corregidor, and American Ex-Prisoners of War.

Mr. Speaker, selfless service to those around him defined Bill Hamilton's life. He worked tirelessly to defend our freedom and to better communities in which he lived. He is loved by his community, and he certainly left an enduring impression on our Nation. He will be forever remembered as a selfless soldier, community member, husband, father, friend to hundreds, and an honorably fighting Texas Aggie.

My wife, Gina, and I offer our deepest and heartfelt condolences to the Hamilton family. We also lift up the family and friends of Bill in our prayers.

I have requested that a United States flag be flown over the Capitol to honor the life and legacy of Bill Hamilton, Jr.

As I close today, I urge all Americans to continue praying for our country during these difficult times, for our military men and women who protect us from external threats, and for our first responders who protect us here at home.

HONORING WILTON A. LANNING

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wilton Lanning of Waco, Texas, who passed away on January 10, 2018.

Wilton was born on June 12, 1936, in Waco. He graduated from Waco High School and would go on to graduate from Baylor University and would be a proud Baylor Bear for the rest of his life. At Baylor, Wilton met his wife of 57 years, Lanell "Lee" Lanning.

Wilton was a lifelong Waco resident, a proud advocate for Waco businesses, and an avid amateur historian of the city. He worked for 40 years at Waco's then oldest business, Tom Padgitt, Inc., where he served as president and CEO.

Always looking for ways to push development in Waco, he served as the executive director of the Waco Business League, chairman of the Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce, and he was a member of the Baylor Waco